

# MichiganGenealogist

Genealogy news from the Department of History, Arts and Libraries

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The Michigan library and genealogical communities lost a great friend with the passing of Margaret McCall Thomas Ward. Mrs. Ward died Thursday, Nov. 1, 2007, from complications of leukemia at the Detroit Medical Center. She was 89 years young. Mrs. Ward dedicated her life to her family and to chronicling the history of African American families.

Mrs. Ward was born in Montgomery, Ala., but moved to Detroit as a child. She graduated from Southeastern High School and attended the University of Michigan and Wayne State University. She earned a bachelor's degree in education. She returned to the University of Michigan and earned her Master of Library Science in the early 1960s and went on to complete post-graduate studies in archives and records management and oral history at Wayne State University.

Many family historians will remember Mrs. Ward because of her work with the Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library. She worked closely with the collection from 1974 until her retirement in 1987. During her years with the Burton Collection, she was troubled by the numerous challenges African American genealogists faced when trying to research their families. As a result, she pulled together some like-minded researchers and formed the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society in 1979. This society was the first dedicated to researching "black roots" in Michigan. After retirement she was asked to become librarian for the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History. She served as librarian at the Museum from 1987 to 1999. The Museum's library, that she formed, was named the Margaret McCall Thomas Ward Rare Book Room in her honor. Mrs. Ward was a well-respected librarian, archivist and genealogist.

I had the privilege of attending the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society's tribute to Margaret McCall Thomas Ward in early September. The Society orchestrated a lovely celebration of her life and recognized her many accomplishments. The event allowed Society members and African American family historians to publicly thank Mrs. Ward for her years of dedicated service. The outpouring of love and gratitude was truly touching. I did not know her well, but her generosity, dedication to service and lifelong pursuit of preserving the history of African Americans in Detroit was inspiring. She always had a smile and a kind word to share.

Too often we let our "heroes" in the genealogy community pass away without adequately recognizing or publicly thanking them for their accomplishments. On that day, I commented to several officers of the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society how great I thought it was that they took the time to create an event to recognize Mrs. Ward while she was still with us to enjoy it. She was able to see and hear people express how much they appreciated her efforts to preserve African American history and her dedication to building collections that made sure that history was not forgotten. It made me wonder if there were special people in my life that I should be taking the time to thank for everything they have done for me. Are there members in your family or society that deserve public recognition? I would be surprised if you are not able to rattle off a list of names. A photographer was present at the September event and he took photographs of Mrs. Ward with almost all of her guests. My photo with Margaret is on the wall of my office, where it will stay to remind me of her and what good service to genealogists looks like.

Happy searching.

Randy Riley  
Special Collections Manager  
Library of Michigan

# Free Genealogy Seminar on Saturday, March 29, 2008

*by Kris Rzepczynski, Michigan/genealogy coordinator, Library of Michigan*

Mark your calendars! The Library of Michigan will offer a free half-day genealogy seminar on Saturday, March 29, 2008 from 1 to 4:30 p.m. Devoted entirely to online resources and other Web-based collections, the seminar will highlight a number of free Web sites and subscription databases (including HeritageQuest Online and Footnote.com), introduce genealogy researchers to the breadth of material available online and emphasize specific genealogy resources available at the Library of Michigan.

Program topics include:

- **Negotiating Online Passenger & Immigration Lists**
- **Online Research with U.S. Census Records**
- **Effectively Using HeritageQuest Online**
- **Vital Records on the Internet**
- **Utilizing Footnote.com at the Library of Michigan**
- **Cooperation Brings More to Genealogists: The New Family History Archive Collection**

Exact program times and registration information will be available soon, so look for additional information to be posted at <http://michigan.gov/familyhistory>. Seating will be limited, so registration is recommended. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Library of Michigan's Special Collection Services at (517) 373-1300 or by email at [librarian@michigan.gov](mailto:librarian@michigan.gov).

We look forward to seeing everyone in March!

## Presentations by Library of Michigan Staff

Library of Michigan staff members will be presenting the following programs this winter:

Edwina Morgan

March 29 - **"Effectively Using HeritageQuest Online" and "Online Research at the Family History Archive"** at the Library of Michigan Genealogy Seminar in Lansing

Gloriane Peck

March 29 - **"Negotiating Online Passenger & Immigration Lists" and "Vital Records on the Internet"** at the Library of Michigan Genealogy Seminar in Lansing

Kris Rzepczynski

Feb.14 - **"Coming to America: Research With Ship Passenger Lists"** at the Ford Genealogy Club in Dearborn

March 29 - **"Utilizing Footnote.com at the Library of Michigan" and "Online Research With U.S. Census Records"** at the Library of Michigan Genealogy Seminar in Lansing

# Scheduled Collections Closings for the Library of Michigan

The following areas in the Library of Michigan will be closed to staff and patrons due to building renovations. The schedule listed is subject to change. When planning a visit, please call ahead to confirm that the collections you are interested in are accessible.

Dec. 26, 2007 – Jan. 11, 2008: **Main Collection**, Third Floor South

Jan. 14-31, 2008: **Microfilm Room**, Second Floor South  
**Genealogical microfilm and fiche will be unavailable during this time.**

Jan. 14 – Feb. 29, 2008: **Federal Documents**, Fourth Floor South

Feb. 4-15, 2008: **Rare Book Room**, Fourth Floor North

March 3–21, 2008: **Dewey Collection**, Fourth Floor North

The Library of Michigan regrets any inconveniences these closings may cause. If you have any questions, please see a librarian.

## 2007 Family History Month a Success

*by Kris Rzepczynski, Michigan/genealogy coordinator, Library of Michigan*

With the holidays upon us, we can look back on another successful Family History Month. Throughout the month of October, the Library of Michigan celebrated Family History Month by offering 30 genealogy programs during the month.

Topics included Beginning Your Family History Research, Effectively Using HeritageQuest Online, Preservation Hints for Your Family Treasures, and Vital Records at the Library of Michigan. The annual Michigan Genealogical Council seminar, held at the Library of Michigan on Oct. 20, was another success with attendance reaching over 100 people. Seeing all the new researchers during the month was particularly exciting, too, as it captured the essence of Family History Month: bringing people together to investigate their ancestral roots.

Family History Month has always offered the Library of Michigan the chance to thank the state's genealogical community for its dedicated support throughout the past year. Plans are already under way for next year's programming, including the upcoming Library genealogy seminar on March 29, 2008; stay tuned for more information, including the program schedule and registration information.

## John Castle Receives the Library of Michigan's Genealogy Appreciation Award

*by Karen White, reference librarian, Library of Michigan*

On Oct. 20, the Library of Michigan presented John Castle with the 2007 Genealogy Appreciation Award, during a Family History Month seminar.

John is a charter member of the Ingham County Genealogical Society, having served as its president, membership secretary and currently as the chairman of the society's publishing committee.



*Family history researcher John Castle and Randy Riley, Library of Michigan special collections manager, celebrate after John received the 2007 Genealogy Appreciation Award in October at the Library of Michigan.*



John clearly demonstrates a commitment to genealogy research and the preservation of records and a strong belief in freely sharing information. This has been particularly evident as John has worked tirelessly for the society on the project to microfilm both the records of all 16 townships in Ingham County and various Ingham County newspapers. A copy of all the items microfilmed by the ICGS has been donated to the Library of Michigan.

John is an expert on township records in Michigan, why they are so valuable and how one can use them. He has given many presentations on this topic, including one as part of the Oct. 20 seminar at the Library of Michigan.

During the award presentation, John presented something as well. He delivered the final installment of township records to Randy Riley, special collections manager at the Library of Michigan. John donated, on behalf of the society, microfilm copies of the records from Webberville and Williamston townships.

The Library of Michigan has given this award to a deserving member of the genealogical community in Michigan every year since 2001 during Family History Month. Past recipients include Dr. Joseph Druse, Mrs. Barbara Brown, Mr. J. William Gorski, Mrs. Ruth Lewis and Ms. Peggy Sawyer Williams.

## Now Online: Materials from Family History Month Workshops

*by Gloriane Peck, special collections librarian, Library of Michigan*

Didn't make it to one of the Family History Month workshops in October? Looking for a refresher course on one of the program topics? Then check out the Library of Michigan's genealogy Web site, <http://www.michigan.gov/familyhistory>, for PDF files of the PowerPoint presentation and handout from each session offered by the Library.

Workshop topics include:

- Beginning Your Family History Research
- Discovering the Genealogy Resources at the Library of Michigan
- Effectively Using HeritageQuest Online
- Utilizing Newspaper Indexes in Locating Obituaries

To access these materials, go to the Library's genealogy Web site, <http://www.michigan.gov/familyhistory>, and click on the link to Genealogy Workshops in the left-hand column. Or go directly to the genealogy workshops page at [http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449\\_18635\\_43799—,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449_18635_43799—,00.html). Materials from the Learning More at the Library of Michigan 2007 seminar are also available online.

## Accessing HeritageQuest Online Through MeL

*by Gloriane Peck, special collections librarian, Library of Michigan*

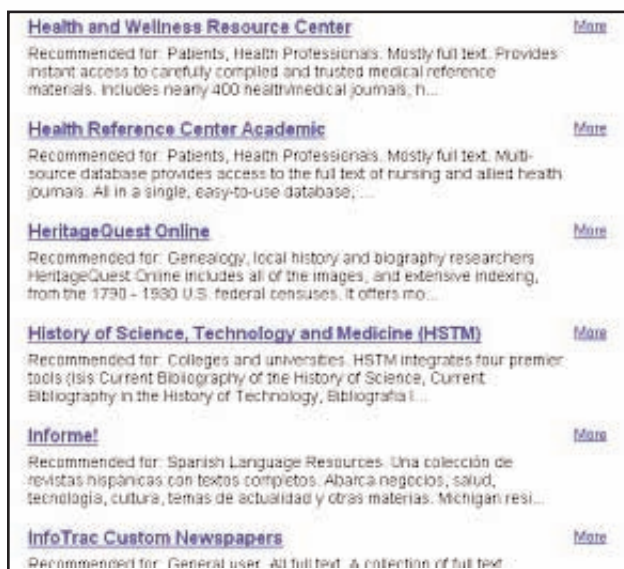
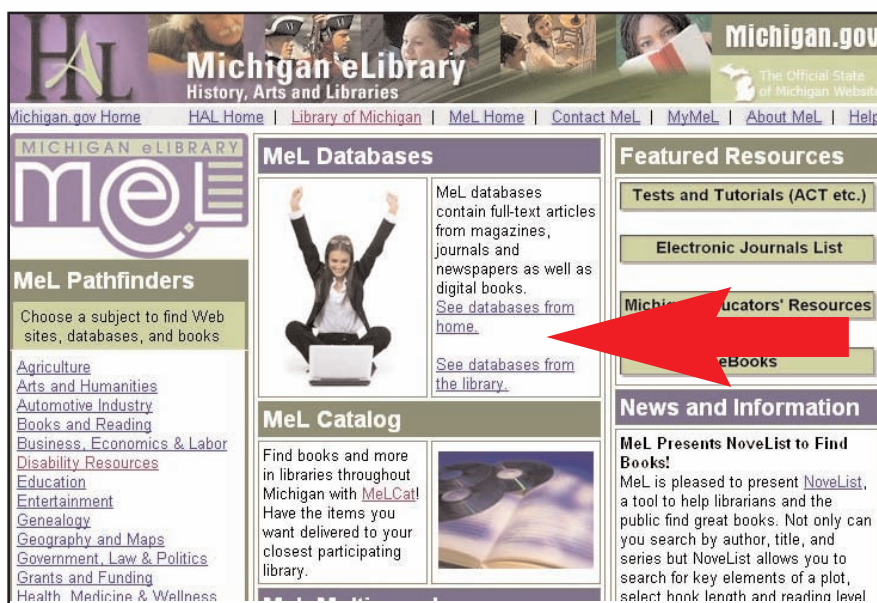
HeritageQuest Online is now available for all Michigan residents to access anytime, anywhere. So even after your local library is closed for the night or when you're away from home on a research trip, you may access HeritageQuest through MeL, the Michigan eLibrary. MeL is funded by the state of Michigan, through the Library of Michigan. If you haven't tried

HeritageQuest yet, here are instructions for accessing it through MeL, at <http://mel.org>.

Once you are on the MeL homepage, click on “See databases from home.” This will take you to an alphabetical list of the databases offered through MeL. Scroll down to HeritageQuest Online, and click on the link to connect to HQ. You will be prompted to log on by entering your Michigan driver’s license or state ID number.

To use HeritageQuest from a Michigan library, click on “See databases from the library” from the MeL homepage. This will take you to an alphabetical list of databases, and you may click any of the resource titles to go directly to the database. When you use HQ, or any of the MeL databases, from a library, you will not be prompted to enter any log-in information.

HeritageQuest has more than 22,000 searchable family and local history books (assembled genealogies, local histories, primary source materials, and genealogical and local history serials including material from all 50 states and Canada); the complete set of the U.S. federal census, from 1790 to 1930, with name indexes for many years; PERSI, the PERiodical Source Index, which has index entries for more than two million genealogy and local history articles; select Revolutionary War records; Freedman’s Bank records and more.





**Michigan eLibrary**  
History, Arts and Libraries

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**MICHIGAN eLIBRARY**  
**meL**

MeL Home | MeL Databases | MeL Catalog | MeL Multisearch | MeL Michigana | MeL Best of the Web

Find magazine articles, electronic books, and more in selected resources. All you have to do is verify that you're a Michigan resident.

Please enter your driver's license, state ID number, or choose your library from the drop-down menu. Be sure to include all letters and numbers. You do not need to use spaces. Your driver's license or state identification number will only be used to show that you are a Michigan resident. Children can use the license number of a parent or guardian.

If you do not have a Michigan driver's license or state ID card, you may use this service at your [local Michigan library](#).

**Login using Michigan Driver's License or State ID number**

**Login using Library Card**

In keeping with the [Michigan eLibrary Privacy Policy](#), this logon process uses session-only cookies to allow access to the MeL databases. No personal information is collected. The cookies expire at the end of each session. Expired cookies stay on your computer until you remove them.

**HERITAGE QUEST ONLINE**

- ▶ **Search Census** Find ancestors in the complete set of U.S. Federal Census images from 1790-1930, including name indexes for many years.
- ▶ **Search Books** Find information on people and places described in over 22,000 family and local histories.
- ▶ **Search PERSI™** Find information about people and places from this index of over 2 million genealogy and local history articles.
- ▶ **Search Revolutionary War** Search selected records from the Revolutionary War Era Pension & Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files.
- ▶ **Search Freedman's Bank** Search for individuals in Freedman's Bank (1865-1874), which was founded to serve African Americans.
- ▶ **Search U.S. Serial Set** Search the Memorials, Petitions, and Private Relief Actions of the U.S. Congress in the *TerrieNexis®* U.S. Serial Set.

## Michigan Newspaper Project Ends After 14-Year Run

by Kevin Dreidger, cataloger and collection conservator, Michigan Newspaper Project

After 14 years, the Michigan Newspaper Project has completed its run. Earlier this year, the final reels of newly microfilmed newspaper, the *East Jordan News-Herald*, were added to the Library of Michigan collection.



The Michigan Newspaper Project (MNP) was part of the United States Newspaper Program, a project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and organized by the Library of Congress. This project began at the Library of Michigan in 1993 with a planning grant. Subsequent years were spent contacting libraries, receiving inventories of their collections, and traveling to collections to catalog their titles and record their holdings. The project staff encountered nearly 4,000 Michigan newspaper titles and added or enhanced thousands of records on WorldCat.

This record became the basis for the microfilming, which was conducted by Frank Boles and the staff of the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University. Because of the large number of unfiled titles, a committee of experts selected a list of titles to film.

The MNP filmed about 105 newspaper titles covering 33 counties. The earliest title filmed was the *Constantine Republican* (Saint Joseph County), 1836 to 1838. The longest-running paper filmed was the *Yale Expositor* (Saint Clair County), 1894 to 2003. In addition to English-language newspapers, the MNP filmed titles in Finnish, Romanian, Greek, Spanish and Polish.

This project created nearly 800 new reels of microfilmed Michigan newspapers, with one copy going to the library that supplied the paper, one copy staying at the Clarke Historical Library and two copies going to the Library of Michigan. All of this film is available from the Library of Michigan through interlibrary loans.

The Michigan Newspaper Project made a significant impact in preserving and providing access to Michigan's newspaper heritage. The cataloging preserves the bibliographic history of Michigan's newspapers and allows researchers to discover relevant newspapers and which libraries own them, while the microfilming preserves and provides increased access to many more of Michigan's newspapers.

#### **New Resource! Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers**

<http://www.loc.gov/chroniclingamerica>

This database from the Library of Congress combines all the catalog records and holdings of U.S. newspapers, with a variety of helpful search options.

## **What's New at the Library of Michigan?**

*by Charles Hagler, reference librarian, Library of Michigan*

Do you want to know what new Michigan and genealogy materials have been added to the Library of Michigan's collection? Access to ANSWER, our online catalog, is available on the Internet at <http://answercat.org>. You can search the monthly new Michigan and genealogy books by clicking on the "Check for New Books" button at the bottom of the ANSWER menu page.

Please note, many of our genealogical resources are part of the non-circulating collection and are only available for on-site use at the Library. ANSWER does not provide access to periodical articles, microforms, or CD-ROM and Internet databases, but does indicate the location and call number where the item can be found in the Library of Michigan.

Here are a few notable titles that have arrived since the last issue of *Michigan Genealogist*.



*Certificates of Enrollment Issued for Merchant Vessels at Detroit, Michilimackinac, and Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan, 1818-1898, and, Certificates of Registration Issued for Merchant Vessels at Detroit, Michigan, 1818-1831.* 8 reels. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2006.

**Microfilm VK24 .M5 C47 2006**

*Certificates of Registration Issued for Merchant Vessels at Great Lakes Ports, 1815-1872, and Related Master Abstracts of Registers, 1815-1910.* 3 reels. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2007.

**Microfilm VK 23.7 .C47 2007**

*Master Abstracts of Certificates of Enrollment Issued for Merchant Vessels at Selected Great Lakes Ports, 1815-1911.* 5 reels. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2007.

**Microfilm VK23.7 .M37 2007**

Certificates of enrollment, registration, or license were known collectively as vessel documents. They were issued to managing owners or masters after proper measurement and proof of place and date of construction were provided as evidence that vessels of five-ton or greater capacity were entitled to rights and privileges of American-documented vessels. More information can be found at

<http://www.archives.gov/research/microfilm/m2107.pdf>

*Name Index to Early Illinois Records. 1855 Census.* 26 reels. Springfield, IL: Illinois State Archives, 19—.

**Microfilm F540 .I5 1981**

The Library has the actual census records that this set of microfilm index in our collection under *Illinois 1825-1865 State Census*, **Microfilm F540 .I453 2000z.**

*Register of Pupils of the Mt. Pleasant Indian School, Mt. Pleasant Agency, Michigan, 1893-1932.* Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2006.

**Microfilm E97.6.U55 R44 2006**

United State government school set up to re-educate Native American children was located at Mount Pleasant, Michigan.

## Find Library of Michigan Genealogy Subject Guides on the Web

*by Gloriane Peck, special collections librarian, Library of Michigan*

The Library of Michigan Special Collections staff creates subject guides to the Abrams Foundation Historical Collection to inform researchers of key genealogical resources and help them explore different types of research materials and holdings.

These guides, also called Abrams Collection Genealogy Highlights, cover a wide range of topics, from ethnic genealogy to military records to census and vital records research. Each guide includes a summary or explanation of the topic; suggestions for research possibilities; tips on keywords and searching ANSWER, the Library's online catalog (<http://www.answercat.org>); and lists of relevant materials, including call numbers for finding the items at the Library.

In the past, these guides have been printed. The guides are not reprinted once all the copies are gone, which makes the Library's genealogy Web site, <http://www.michigan.gov/familyhistory>, a great

place for finding past issues. In addition, new Highlights are no longer being printed and are offered only on the Web. The following Abrams Highlights have been added to the Library's Web site recently:

- Courthouse Records ([http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835\\_18895\\_20699-167409—,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835_18895_20699-167409—,00.html))
- Organizing Your Genealogy Research ([http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835\\_18895\\_20699-167435—,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835_18895_20699-167435—,00.html))
- Pennsylvania Genealogy Resources ([http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835\\_18895\\_20699-167453—,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835_18895_20699-167453—,00.html))

Watch for these Abrams Highlights coming soon:

- National Archives finding aids and resources
- Probate records
- Newspapers on microfilm

To see a full list of the Abrams Highlights subject guides, please go to the Library of Michigan's genealogy Web site, <http://www.michigan.gov/familyhistory>. Scroll down the page until you see a heading for Online Research Tools in the center of the page. Next, click on Library of Michigan Subject Guides. Here you'll find a list of all the Highlights published by the Library. You may go directly to this page at [http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835\\_18895\\_20699—,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-18835_18895_20699—,00.html).

## Map Guide to German Parish Registers

*by Kendel Darragh, reference librarian, Library of Michigan*

The *Map Guide to German Parish Registers* by Kevan M. Hansen (CS 614.H36 volumes 1–10) is a helpful resource for genealogical research. Each volume in this set contains an outline map of the area covered in that volume, showing the location and name of each Kreis (county); then each Kreis is shown, broken down into parishes. Family History Library microfilm numbers are included, when available. Additionally, the towns and villages in each parish are listed as well as indexed. Because Lutheran and Catholic parish lines are not identical, each church's parishes are handled separately. Other churches are listed separately by town and Kreis at the end of the volume, but without maps. When available, Family History Library microfilm numbers are included in this section as well.

Additional features of each volume include a brief, readable historical background of the area and genealogical resources related to the area, including civil registration resources, emigration resources, lineage books, periodicals, genealogical collections, gazetteers and contact information for local archives and repositories.

For researchers with detailed information about family members, these books can help one quickly get to the microfilmed parish registers, if they are available. For those with more challenging research to do, these guides can facilitate radius searches of nearby parishes, since it is easy to see which parishes are close to each other.

The Library of Michigan currently owns volumes one through ten, which cover Hessen, Baden, Mecklenburg, Oldenburg, Schleswig-Holstein, Wurttemberg, Hohenzollern and Hessen-Nassau. The Library will be purchasing additional volumes in this set as well. You can read more about the *Map Guide to German Parish Registers* and its uses at Kevan Hansen's Web site, <http://germanmapguide.com/german-parish-registers/a-quick-overview/>.

# Researching Your Ontario Ancestors

Michigan and Ontario will always be joined closely together regardless of belonging to two different nations. Or at least currently Detroit and Windsor belong to different nations.

The river that divides them is small enough that it can be crossed on horseback, as was demonstrated in July of 1796 when the British were formally handing Detroit over to the Americans. Due to the price on his head, the American traitor and British loyalist Simon Girty jumped his mare down the Detroit embankment and swam her across the Detroit River in order to escape the oncoming American troops. Onlookers feared for the horse, not so much for Mr. Girty.

With linkages, spanning from exploration to the present day, Ontario and Michigan will always share people, businesses and customs. The Library of Michigan strives to continuously add Ontario material to the Abrams Historical Foundation Collection in order to aid people from both sides of the river in researching their genealogy. Beyond the following additions to our in-house material, please feel free to explore the Ontario French Catholic Church Records in the Drouin Collection, 1747-1967, available at the Library of Michigan on Ancestry Library Edition.

From home, you might review the Ontario materials available via Heritage Quest. Well over 4,000 relevant titles may be found in its book collection, with more material available via PERSI and the Serial Set. Start out your search by visiting the Michigan elibrary at <http://mel.org>.

Campey, Lucille H. *Scottish Pioneers of Upper Canada, 1784-1855; Glengarry and Beyond*. Toronto, ON: Natural Heritage Books, 2005.  
[F1059.7.S4 C36 2005](#)

Dunford, Fraser, *A Beginner's Guide To Ontario Genealogy*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2007  
[CS16 .D863 2007](#)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Municipal Records In Ontario; History and Guide*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2005.  
[CS88.O6 D87 2005](#)

Eker, Glen. *Jews Resident In Ontario According To the 1851 to 1901 Censuses of Canada*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2002.  
[CS88.O6 E44 2002](#)

Faux, David Kenneth, *Understanding Ontario First Nations Genealogical Records; Sources and Case Studies*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2002.  
[E78.O5 F38 2002](#)

Mckenzie, Donald A., *Obituaries From the Christian Guardian, July 1884 to December 1890*. Campbellville, ON: Global Heritage Press, 2005.  
[CS88.O6 M3875 2005](#)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Upper Canada Naturalization Records, 1828-1850*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2005.  
[CS88.O6 M389 2005](#)

Merriman, Brenda Dougall, *Genealogy In Ontario; Searching the Records*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2002.



[E78.O5 F38 2002](#)

Obee, Dave, *Federal Voters Lists In Ontario, 1935-1979; A Finding Aid*. Victoria, BC: D. Obee, 2004.  
[JL193 .O237 2004](#)

Reid, Roger William Gaffield, *Index to the Ontario Genealogical Society's Families; Volume II, 1998-2006*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2007.  
[CS80 .R44 2007](#)

Society For the Relief of the Sick and Destitute, *Records of the Society for the Relief of the Sick and Destitute; 1817-1847; A Genealogical Reference Listing*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2002.  
[HV4050.T6 S63 2002](#)

Stratford-Devai, Fawne, *Province Of Ontario Immigration Records; An Overview*. Milton, ON: Global Heritage Press, 2003.  
[F1058 .S77 2003](#)

Stratford-Devai, Fawne and Ruth Burkholder, *Ontario Land Registry Office Records; A Guide*, Milton, ON: Global Heritage Press, 2003.  
[F1057.7 .S773 2003](#)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Vital Records In Ontario Before 1869; A Guide To Early Ontario Vital Records*, Milton, ON: Global Heritage Press, 2003.  
[F1057.5 .S77 2003](#)

Thornley, Bruce, *Index To Overseas Deaths Of Ontario Servicemen and Servicewomen; 1937-1947, 2 vols*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Genealogical Society, 2006.  
[D797.C22 O58 2006](#)

## Using Online Indexes to Michigan Land Records

by Gloriane Peck, special collections librarian, Library of Michigan

Genealogists searching for land records have a couple options for finding this information.

Perhaps the most well-known resource is Ancestry Library Edition (ALE), which is available for in-library use at the Library of Michigan. ALE has a database called Michigan Land Records, which features information from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's *Michigan Pre-1908 Homestead & Cash Entry Patent and Cadastral Survey Plat Index*. To access this database from the ALE homepage, click on the search tab at the top of the page. A column on the right side of the search page shows links to different record types, including a link to "Search Court, Land & Probate Records." Follow this link. Below the search box on this page, look for a list headed "Search Individual Court, Land & Probate Collection." This alphabetical list shows all of Ancestry's databases on this topic. Scroll through the list to the link to Michigan Land Records. Clicking on the link will allow you to search this database specifically.

A name search of the database shows a list of possible matching names; the land office, such as Kalamazoo or Detroit; acres purchased and the issue date. For each name, there is a link to "View Record." The record gives additional index information, including a land description, which gives a township and range number, such as 1S, 4W. Ancestry does not list the county where the land was located.

It is important to note that the Ancestry printer-friendly option does not include the land description, which is key information for continuing a search. So be sure to record this information before moving to the next step.

Another option for searching land records is the Bureau of Land Management's General Land Office Records site, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov>. GLO Records contains more than three million federal land title records issued between 1820 and 1908.

From the homepage, click on the link to Search Land Patents. Here you will be prompted to enter a state and a last name (first name is optional). The results list shows name, state, county, issue date and land office. Finding out the county here is very helpful. Clicking on the land patentee's name will take you to additional information, including tabs for Legal Land Description and Document Image. The Legal Land Description lists the same information as found in the Ancestry index, with the addition of the county. The Document Image shows a digitized copy of the land patent.

To find more information using the land description you recorded from either Ancestry Library Edition or GLO Records, you may want to use the Library of Michigan's collection of *Michigan Tract Books* on microfilm, HD 243 .M5 T73z. The Library has an index to the microfilm. It isn't a name index but an index to which counties and townships are on which microfilm reel. This index, *The Federal Land Patents: Michigan*, Mich HD 243 .M5 T73z, is shelved at the genealogy desk. Using the index, look up the county, then use the township and range numbers from your citation to determine which microfilm reel to check.

As the register of land sales, the *Michigan Tract Books* include a description of the land, the number of acres and the rate per acre, as well as the purchase cost, name of purchaser and the date of sale. The date of sale and the patent issue date may vary. According to the GLO Records FAQ, <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/FAQ.asp>, the General Land Office encountered a backlog in the mid-1800s, which accounts for the time between the sale and the signing of the patent.

In addition to the microfilm set of *Michigan Tract Books*, the Library has other items on first landowners, which typically are county-level items, such as *Tract Book of Calhoun County, Michigan: First Land Purchases from the Government*. Search ANSWER, the Library's online catalog, at <http://www.answercat.org>. Below are some example keyword searches for Calhoun County, but titles exist for many counties:

- calhoun and tract book
- calhoun and first land
- calhoun and landowners

## Where There's a Will, There's a Way: Research with Probate Records

by Kris Rzepczynski, Michigan/genealogy coordinator, Library of Michigan

To family history researchers, the phrase "probate records" often means simply wills, but probate research offers much greater insight into families, their property and the ancestral relationships that genealogy research is built upon. Today, the definition of "probate" has been expanded to include additional documents generated during the probate process, including account sheets, assignments of dower, depositions, estate inventories, executor releases, guardianship petitions, sale bills and, of course, wills.

Probate is a state function, thus the laws across the United States vary from state to state. Here in Michigan, most probate records are available at the local county courthouse. That said, there are a number of counties – including Ingham, Monroe and Wayne – available at the Archives of Michigan; check the Archives' Circular No. 6 ([http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mhc\\_sa\\_circular06\\_49689\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mhc_sa_circular06_49689_7.pdf)) for more detailed holdings information. In addition, a number of Michigan county probate records have been indexed and published by local genealogical societies, and are available at the Library of Michigan.

Most states require probate to begin the first term of court following the property owner's death, typically 30-90 days after the death. Given this information, researchers can estimate an ancestor's approximate date of death. Additional genealogy clues often found in probate records are an ancestor's previous residence, household items and their value, former spouse(s), religious affiliation, occupation or trade, land ownership, military experience and the estate's witnesses and executors, who are typically family members. Most importantly, probate records frequently reveal direct evidence on family relationships.

The terminology used in probate research is often a stumbling block for researchers. With the assistance of a legal dictionary, however, researchers can quickly grasp the difference between testate (the deceased left a will) and intestate (no will), how a holographic will (written, dated and signed by testator in his or her own handwriting) compares with a nuncupative one (dictated orally), and the difference between an estate's executor, administrator and guardian. When researching probate records, also remember that not everyone composed a will or owned any property of real value; this is especially true in heavily populated urban areas. As very few statewide probate indexes exist, it is almost necessary to identify the ancestor's county of residence at the date of death.

The following list is a sampling of probate court resources available at the Library of Michigan. Additional titles may be located by searching ANSWER, the Library's online catalog, available at <http://www.answercat.org>. The easiest way to locate probate resources in ANSWER is with a keyword search using the word **probate** or **wills**, followed by the state or county you are interested in. Here are some additional examples to help maximize your search results:

- **hillsdale county michigan probate**
- **ohio probate court**
- **england abstracts**
- **pennsylvania wills**

## GENERAL RESEARCH GUIDES

Black, Henry C. *Black's Law Dictionary*. 8th ed. St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 2004.  
**Law KF 156 .B53 2004**

Pratt, David H. *Researching British Probates, 1354-1858: A Guide to the Microfilm Collection of the Family History Library*. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1992.  
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Vol. 1: Northern England/Province of York.

Rapaport, Diane. *New England Court Records: A Research Guide for Genealogists and Historians*. Burlington, MA: Quill Pen Press, 2006.  
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Remington, Gordon L. *New York State Probate Records: A Genealogist's Guide to Testate and Intestate Records*. Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2002.  
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Rose, Christine. *Courthouse Research for Family Historians: Your Guide to Genealogical Treasures*. San Jose, CA: CR Publications, 2004.  
**Genealogy CS 49 .R66 2004**

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Druse, Joseph L., and Eleanor B. LeDuc. *Abstracts of the Early Probate Records of Ingham County, Michigan, 1838-1869*. Lansing, MI: Mid-Michigan Genealogical Society, 1980.  
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Ford, Virginia S., and Margaret F. Robinson. *Abstracts of Kalamazoo, Michigan, Probate Records, 1831-1857*. Lansing, MI: Lansing Chapter, DAR, 1979.  
**Michigan KFM 4254 .F67z**

*Genesee County, Michigan, Surname Index: Probate Court, 1852-1883*. Lansing, MI: State Archives of Michigan, 1990.  
**Michigan Documents F 572 .G3 G5 1990**

Hillsdale County (Mich.). Probate Court. *Probate Packets, 1900-1914; Probate Index, Hillsdale County*. 87 reels. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1985.  
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Muskegon County (Mich.). Probate Court. *Probate of Wills, Probate Court, Muskegon County [Mich.]; Unprobated Wills, Muskegon Co., Michigan*. 6 reels. Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1983.  
**Microfilm F 572 .M9 P7 1983**

Muszynski, Shirley, and Dan Muszynski. *Wills Recorded in Deed Books in Monroe County, Michigan: With Index*. 5 vols. Erie, MI: S. & D. Muszynski, 1995.  
**Michigan F 572 .M7 M85 1995**  
Covers 1847-1920.

*Probate Records from Archives of Wayne County, Michigan*. 3 vols. Detroit: Louisa St. Clair Chapter, DAR, 1936.  
**Michigan F 572 .W4 P76 1936**

*Saint Clair County, Michigan, Surname Index: Probate, 1828-1872*. Lansing, MI: State Archives of Michigan, 1990.  
**Michigan Documents F 572 .S3 S33 1990**

Serrell, Alice D. *Abstracts of Probate Files in the Probate Court, Oakland County, Michigan*. 2 vols. Pontiac, MI: General Richardson Chapter, DAR, 1956.  
**Michigan F 572 .O2 S477 1956**

Sherman, Alonzo J., comp. *Index to Probate Records, Iosco County, Michigan, 1859-1906*.  
Oscoda, MI: Huron Shores Genealogical Society, 2003.  
**Michigan F 572 .I63 S44 2003**

Van Buren County (Mich.). Probate Court. *Van Buren County Record of Guardianship*. 1 reel.  
Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1983.  
**Microfilm F 572 .V3 M5 1983**  
Covers ca. 1845-1866.

## OTHER STATES

*Abstracts of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Wills*. 2 vols. Westminster, MD: Family Line Publications, 1995.  
**Genealogy F 157 .L2 W84 1995**  
Covers 1732-1820.

Annable, Edward L. *Pope County, Illinois, Probate Records, 1816-1835*. Cypress, IL: E.L. Annable, 1994.  
**Genealogy F 547 .P7 A67 1994**

Austin, Jeannette H. *Georgia Intestate Records*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1986.  
**Genealogy F 285 .A8895 1986**

Bell, Carol W. *Ohio Wills and Estates to 1850: An Index*. Columbus, OH: C.W. Bell, 1981.  
**Genealogy F 478 .B44**

Field, Edward. *Index to the Probate Records of the Municipal Court of the City of Providence, Rhode Island: From 1646 to and Including the Year 1899*. 1902. Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1998.  
**Genealogy F 89 .P9 P88 1998**

Hughes, Lois E., comp. *Wills Filed in Probate Court, Hamilton County, Ohio, 1791-1901*. 2 vols. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1991.  
**Genealogy F 497 .H2 H85 1991**

Mitchell, Thornton W. *North Carolina Wills: A Testator Index, 1665-1900*. Rev. ed. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1992.  
**Genealogy F 253 .M57 1992**

Moore, Caroline T., and Agatha A. Simmons. comps. *Abstracts of the Wills of the State of South Carolina*. 3 vols. Charleston, SC: C.T. Moore, 1960-1969.  
**Genealogy F 268 .M66 1960**  
Covers 1670-1784.

Ohio. Probate Court (Hamilton County). *Index to Administration Dockets*. 1 reel. Cincinnati: Hamilton County Probate Court, 1937-1963.  
**Microfilm F 490 .O35 Reel 210-168**

Rodgers, Robert H. *Middlesex County in the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay in New England: Records of Probate and Administration, March 1660/61 – December 1670*. Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 2001.  
Genealogy F 72 .M7 R643 2001

Torrence, Clayton. *Virginia Wills and Administrations, 1632-1800: An Index of Wills Recorded in Local Courts ....* 1930. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1965.  
Genealogy F 225 .T85 1965

## INTERNATIONAL

Coldham, Peter W., comp. *American Wills Proved in London, 1611-1775*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1992.  
Genealogy CS 436 .L7 A14 1992

— . *American Wills & Administrations in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1610-1857*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1989.  
Genealogy CS 434 .C6 1989

Phillimore, W.P.W., and Gertrude Thrift, eds. *Indexes to Irish Wills, 1909-1920*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1970.  
Genealogy CS 497 .A1 P475 1970

Zuefelt, Bill, ed. *Court of Probate: Registers and Estate Files at the Archives of Ontario, 1793-1859 – An Index for Genealogical Research*. Toronto: Ontario Genealogical Society, 1986.  
Genealogy CD 3627 .O5 C68 1986

## ONLINE RESOURCES

### Archives of Michigan

<http://www.michigan.gov/archivesofmi>

Circular No. 6 – Probate Court Records – lists the Michigan materials available at the Archives. Counties include: Berrien, Eaton, Hillsdale, Ingham, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Monroe and Wayne.

### Bouvier Law Dictionary

<http://www.constitution.org/bouv/bouvier.htm>

Free, searchable version of an 1856 legal dictionary.

### Cyndi's List: Wills and Probate

<http://www.cyndislist.com/wills.htm>

An excellent starting point for probate research online.

### St. Louis Probate Court Digitization Project

<http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/stlprobate>

Digital project for St. Louis (MO) City/County covers 1802-1900.



# The First Three Years of the Michigan First Vital Records Act

by Charles Hagler, reference librarian, Library of Michigan

When Michigan began to compile birth, marriage and death records after the passage of Public Act No. 194 of 1867, the Secretary of State's office issued annual reports, beginning in 1868, on the statistical data that was obtained. The first three editions *Annual Report of the Secretary of State of the State of Michigan Relating to the Registry and Return of Birth, Marriages and Death*, under the supervision of Oliver L. Spaulding, contain useful genealogical information about how successfully the law was being carried out.

While Secretary of State Spaulding in general praised the county clerks for their efforts to carry out the law, he noted that here was some anecdotal evidence that some clergy members seemed to be not making an effort to record marriages of their parishioners or filling out the proper forms provided for them by the state of Michigan. During this time period, a member of the clergy or the local Justice of the Peace who performed the act reported marriages to the county clerk. This complaint was later eliminated with the issuance of marriage licenses in 1888.

Secretary Spaulding was very specific about which counties, townships and cities failed to comply with the law in whole or part. This information could be helpful to genealogists looking for an ancestor's vital record.

Counties that failed to report births, marriages and deaths for 1867:

- Saginaw
- Chippewa
- Keweenaw
- Mackinac
- Manitou

Townships that failed to report births and deaths for 1867:

- Allegan County townships of Gun Plains, Lee, Otsego, Pine Plains and Saugatuck
- Bay County townships of Beaver and Arenac
- Emmet County township of LaCroix
- Marquette County townships of Marquette and Negaunee
- Ontonagon County townships of Rockland and Carp Lake
- Shiawassee County townships of Perry, Woodhull and Hazleton

Cities that failed to report births and deaths for 1867:

- Detroit
- Owosso 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> districts

Counties that failed to report births, marriages and deaths for 1868:

- Chippewa
- Keweenaw
- Mackinaw
- Manitou

Township that failed to report births, marriages and deaths for 1868:

- Alpena County township of Ossineke
- Isabella County townships of Isabella and Broomfield
- Oceana County township of Pentwater

Counties that failed to report births, marriages and deaths for 1869:

Chippewa  
Delta  
Keweenaw  
Mackinac  
Manitou

Townships that failed to report births, marriages and deaths for 1869:

Huron County townships of Sheridan and White Rock

Later *Annual Reports* did not mention the delinquent reporting of vital records information as a separate item, but as a footnote to the tables and charts created for the report. Interestingly, *Second Annual Report* did mention who were the oldest Michigan man and woman who died between April 5 and Dec. 31, 1868 and gave that same information for each of the counties in Michigan. I will try duplicating that information for the next issue of the *Michigan Genealogist*.

## Virginia Genealogy Sources for Michiganders

*By Edwina Morgan, special collections librarian, Library of Michigan*

Does your family have roots in Virginia? You might be surprised. Today Virginia has defined borders with 95 counties and 40 independent cities. This was not always the case. Decades after the colonies of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia were well established on maps, few colonial administrators and residents really knew where the boundaries were, much less agreed upon them. The longest-lasting border discrepancy, between Virginia and Pennsylvania, was not settled until 1792. Even after that date, rivers that formed natural boundaries were one of the few sure ways individuals knew in which state they lived.

One of the links between Virginia and Michigan is the Ohio River. Southern Ohio was still a part of Virginia until 1787 with the establishment of the Northwest Ordinance. West Virginia did not become an independent state until the Civil War. Between these two lands ran the Ohio River, which was a main gateway to the Mississippi watershed, New Orleans and Western expansion. Well before the American Revolution, individuals were traveling west to trade, hunt and seek out land. Maps dating from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century have sections of what is now Ohio and Michigan marked with notations of "fine land." Settlers, and at times squatters, would travel down the Ohio to advance west and to the north to what are now northern Indiana, Illinois and Michigan. If a family had ancestors from Ohio in the early years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they may very well have originated in Virginia.

The British in Detroit also linked what is now Michigan with Virginia. The American Revolution was fought on the East Coast and in the Southern colonies of Georgia and South Carolina. Few realize the level of hostilities in the far western regions of what was at the time termed to be Pennsylvania and Virginia. Americans were pushing west while the British in Detroit were trying to hold as much land as possible. Military raids and full attacks were launched from British Detroit against the Americans living on the frontier. At the same time, these regions were isolated from assistance due to the mountains that divided them from the Eastern seaboard. Many Americans had to accept British offers of peace and protection in a refugee status. As a result of the hostilities, Americans were also taken captive and often ransomed at the British forts. Others landed in the region because there was a demand for skilled trades people and thus stable occupations in an unstable region.

Genealogical information on families residing in "Virginia" can be found in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee and, at times, Michigan. While seen as a wilderness prior to 1810, in fact thousands of settlers were pouring into Virginia and pushing west as early as the 1730s. After the French and Indian War, settlers, often former military personnel, advanced across the Blue Ridge Mountains. After the Revolutionary War, the Ohio River was the main highway for thousands of pioneers moving west, taking up land in what is now, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and points further west.

### Top Picks

Chalkley, Lyman. *Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia: Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County 1745-1800*. 3 vols.

Baltimore: Genealogy Publishing Company, 1989.

**Genealogy F 232 .A9 A9 1989**

English, William Hayden. *Conquest of the Country Northwest of the River Ohio 1778-1783 and Life of General George Rogers Clark*. 2 vols. Indianapolis:

Bowen Merrill Company, 1896.

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Garner, Grace Kelso. *Earliest Settlers, Western Frederick-eastern Hampshire Counties in Virginia, Their Descendants*. [s.l.: s.n.], 1978.

**Genealogy F232 .F75 G35**

Horn, William Franklin. *Horn Papers: Early Westward Movement on the Monongahela and Upper Ohio, 1765-1795*. 3 vols. [some material factious]. Scottsdale, PA: Greene County Historical Society, 1945.

**Genealogy F 149 .H73**

Joint Committee of Hopewell Friends. *Hopewell Friends History, 1734-1934, Frederick County, Virginia: Records of Hopewell Monthly Meetings and Meetings Reporting to Hopewell*. Strasburg, VA: Shenandoah Publishing House, 1936.

**Genealogy BX 7780 .H6 A4**

Meade, William. *Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia*. [Electronic Resource]. Columbia, MD: Archive CD Books, 2006.

**Genealogy CD F 225 .M43 2006**

Schweitzer, George K. *Virginia Genealogical Research*. Knoxville, TN: George K. Schweitzer. 1982.

**Genealogy F 225 .S38z 1982**

Stinson, Helen S. *Handbook For Genealogical Research in West Virginia*. 3 vols. South Charleston, WV: Kanawha Valley Genealogical Society, 1981-1994.

**Genealogy F 240 .S75 1981Z**

Swem, E. G. *Virginia Historical Index*. Roanoke, VA: Stone Printing and Manufacturing Company, 1934.

**Genealogy F 221 .S93**

Wardell, Patrick G. *Timesaving Aid to Virginia – West Virginia Ancestors*. Athens, GA: Iberian Publishing Company, 1985.

**Genealogy F 225 .W33 1985**



Withington, Lothrop. *Virginia Gleanings in England*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1980.  
Genealogy F 225 .W58 1980

### Census

Heinegg, Paul. *Free African Americans of North Carolina and Virginia*. Baltimore: Clearfield Company, 1997.  
Genealogy E 185.96 .H45 1997

Schreiner-Yantis, Netti. *1787 Census of Virginia: An Accounting of the Name of Every White Male Tithable Over 21 Years*. 3 vols. Springfield, VA: Genealogical Books in Print, 1987.  
Genealogy F 225 .Y36 187

Workman, Velma Ballard. *First Federal Census 1782-83, Virginia Territory*. [S.I.: V.B. Workman], 1984.  
Genealogy F225 .F573 1984

### Immigration

Coldham, Peter Wilson. *King's Passengers to Maryland and Virginia*. Westminster, MD: Family Line Publications, 1997.  
Genealogy F 180 .C64 1997

Hume, Robert. *Early Child Immigrants to Virginia, 1618-1642*. Baltimore: Magna Carta Books, 1986.  
Genealogy F 225 .H86 1986

Standard, William Glover. *Some Emigrants To Virginia*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1964.  
Genealogy F 225 .S82 1964

### Internet Sources

American Civil War Homepage - <http://sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/warweb.html>

County Formation Maps - [http://www.myviriniagenealogy.com/va\\_maps/va\\_cf.htm](http://www.myviriniagenealogy.com/va_maps/va_cf.htm)

Old Virginia Obituaries, 1790-1940 - <http://viriniaobits.homestead.com/>

Rent roll of Virginia 1704, 1705 -  
<http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/va/misc/1704va.txt>

Richmond Daily Dispatch - <http://dlxs.richmond.edu/d/ddr/index.html>

VA-AfricanAmer - A mailing list for anyone with a genealogical interest in African Americans in the state of Virginia. To subscribe send "subscribe" to [va-africanamer-l-request@rootsweb.com](mailto:va-africanamer-l-request@rootsweb.com) (mail mode) or [va-africanamer-d-request@rootsweb.com](mailto:va-africanamer-d-request@rootsweb.com) (digest mode).

Virginia Death Record Index, 1853 to 1896 -  
[http://ajax.lva.lib.va.us/F/?func=file&file\\_name=find-b-clas29&local\\_base=clas29](http://ajax.lva.lib.va.us/F/?func=file&file_name=find-b-clas29&local_base=clas29)

## Land

Joyner, Peggy S. *Abstracts of Virginia's Northern Neck Warrants & Surveys*. Portsmouth, VA: P.S. Joyner, 1985.

Genealogy F 225 .J76 1985 v.3

Joyner, Uylsses P. *Orange County Land Patents*. [Orange, VA:] Orange County Historical Society, 1985.

Genealogy F 232 .O6 J69 1985

Smith, Annie Laurie. *Quit Rents of Virginia: Copy of the Rent Rolls of the Several Counties of Virginia for the Year 1704: And Land Owners of that Section Called the Northern Neck [for which] No Quit Rents Exist*. Richmond, VA: Expert Letter Writing Co. 1957.

Genealogy F225 .S57 1957

*Virginia Land Records*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1982.

Genealogy F 225 .V875 1982

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Bockstruck, Lloyd DeWitt. *Virginia's Colonial Soldiers*.

Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1988.

Genealogy F 225 .B632 1988

Crowther, George Rodney III. *Surname Index to Sixty-Five Volumes of Colonial and Revolutionary Pedigrees*. Washington D.C.: National Genealogical Society, 1964.

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Gill, Harold B. *Apprentices Of Virginia, 1623-1800*. Salt Lake City: Ancestry Publishing, 1989.

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Kanely, Edna A. *Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Employees; 1842 and 1852, 1855 and 1857*. [S.I.]: E.A. Kanely, 1982.

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McAllister, J.T., *Virginia Militia in the Revolutionary War*. Hot Springs, VA: McAllister Publishing Company, 1913.

Genealogy E 263 .V8 M13

Reddy, Anne Waller. *West Virginia Revolutionary Ancestors Whose Services Were Non-Military and Whose Names, Therefore, Do Not Appear in Revolutionary Indexes of Soldiers and Sailors*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1963.

Genealogy F 240 .R31 1963

*Revolutionary Soldiers in Kentucky: Containing a Roll of the Officers of Virginia Line Who Received Land Bounties; A Roll of the Revolutionary Pensioners in Kentucky; a List of the Illinois Regiment Who Served Under George Rogers Clark in the Northwest Campaign*. Greenville, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1992.

Genealogy E 255 .R47 1992

Skidmore, Warren. *Lord Dunmore's Little War of 1774: His Captains and Their Men Who Opened Up Kentucky & the West to American Settlement*. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 2002.  
**Genealogy E 83.77 .S56 2002x**

Smith, John H. *Virginia Revolutionary Militia*. Indianapolis, IN: Ye Olde Genealogie Shoppe, [199-].  
**Genealogy UB 374 .V8 S65 1990z**

*Virginia Military Records*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1983.  
**Genealogy F 225 .V884 1983**

Wardell, Patrick G. *War of 1812: Virginia Bounty Land & Pension Applicants*. Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1987.  
**Genealogy E 359.4 W37 1987**

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*County Court Note-book*, Vols. 1-10. Bethesda, 1921-1931.  
**Genealogy Periodicals**

Dorman, John Frederick, ed. *Virginia Genealogist*. Vols. 1-50. Washington D.C.: Dorman, 1957-2006.  
**Genealogy Periodicals**

*Genealogies of Virginia Families: From Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine*. 4 vols. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co. 1981.  
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Little, Barbara Vines. *Orange County, Virginia Tithables 1743-1783 , Part One & Two*. Orange, VA: Dominion Market Research Corporation. 1988.  
**Genealogy F232 .O6 L58 1988**

*Virginia Tax Records*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1983.  
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Borden, Duane Lyle. *Tombstone Inscriptions: Shenandoah County Virginia and Bordering Counties*. Denver, CO: D.L. Borden, 1986.  
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Houston, William R.M. *Colonial Residents of Virginia's Eastern Shore: Whose Ages Were Proved*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1985.  
**Genealogy F 232 .A2 H68 1985**

*Virginia Will Records from the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, the William and Mary College Quarterly, and Tyler's Quarterly*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1993.  
**Genealogy F 225 V94 1982**



Wulfeck, Dorothy Ford. *Wulfeck's Virginia Marriages: 2nd Series, 1607-1800*.  
Concord, CA: A.M. Coppage, 1990.  
Genealogy F 225 .W842 1990

## Wills and Leaving a Legacy

*By Judith K. Moore, executive director, Library of Michigan Foundation*

"Everyone should have a will." How many times have we heard that message lately? Yet, six out of 10 people do not have a one.

Anything a person owns while living is still owned by the person after death. A will provides the means to transfer ownership after we are gone and offers many benefits. Wills are a tool for helping one's family and provide important tax advantages. Wills offer a way to exercise our freedom and express something about the way we lived our lives. And wills allow us to make an impact on those institutions and issues about which we cared the most. For most of us, it is an opportunity to support an organization in a way we are not able to do during our lifetime.

There are different ways for donors to make a bequest to an institution in their will:

- An outright bequest – you specify a gift of a certain dollar amount, shares of stock, a life insurance policy, a particular collection, real estate, etc.
- A percentage bequest – you give a percentage value of your estate.
- A residual estate – you give all or part of whatever is left in your estate after all specific and percentage bequests have been satisfied.
- A contingent bequest – you designate conditions under which a portion of your estate will be given to the institution.
- A deferred bequest – you direct that an amount of money or particular property be put into a charitable remainder trust to benefit family members until their death, at which time the institution receives the remainder of the estate.

Every situation is different, so donors should consult with their tax advisor to discuss their own tax and financial planning.

As someone who knows what a treasure the Library of Michigan is and how much it has to offer, I invite you to make a bequest in support of the future of the Library. In doing so, you will enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that your future financial support will ensure access to and enrich the Library's collections for the benefit of future generations of Michigan's citizens. Become a member of the **Legacy Society of the Library of Michigan Foundation**. Enrollment in this honorary society is simply a matter of advising the Foundation of the creation of a bequest in your will. The Legacy Society is one way for us to recognize and thank donors whose generosity and foresight will forever make a difference to the Library of Michigan.

For more information, please contact me at (517) 373-4470 or [moorej10@michigan.gov](mailto:moorej10@michigan.gov), without obligation.

# The Birth and Death of Lansing's Black Neighborhoods

by Robert Garrett, archivist, Archives of Michigan

*Editor's note: This article originally appeared in Lansing's City Pulse newspaper (<http://www.lansingcitypulse.com>) on April 4, 2007. It is part of a series of features, written by Archives of Michigan staff, that explores Lansing's history.*

Lansing's African American heritage is as old as the city itself. James Little, a freed slave, arrived here from New York state in 1847. That same year, Lansing became the state capital, and pioneers like Little, who came here to farm, began forging a city out of the wilderness. We can't say for certain that Little was Lansing's first black resident, but he was the first of record.

Three years later, the 1850 census listed 13 African Americans in Lansing, out of a total population of 1,229. Some, like James Little, came from New York. Most of Lansing's early white residents were also from New York, so it's likely these black pioneers traveled with them.

The remaining black residents hailed from Virginia and North Carolina.

The African American population increased slowly during the remainder of the 19th century. Many black settlers came from other Northern states and from the upper South. Some were Canadians descended from escaped slaves. Others came from elsewhere in Michigan, with the majority of those hailing from Cass County, as freed slave communities had been established there before the Civil War. Most early arrivals were single and 19 or younger. As more families arrived, a clear black community began to develop.

Initially, clusters of black households sprung up in otherwise white neighborhoods. By 1900, most of Lansing's African Americans lived on the west side, within a district bound by Ionia Street to the north, Logan Street (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) to the west, Isaac Street (now Olds Avenue) to the south and Townsend Street to the east. This was an established African American area before the Oldsmobile plant was erected nearby.

To what degree were the residents forced into segregation? Like other ethnic groups, African Americans often liked to be near friends, relatives and work places. There was thus at least some voluntary element to the clusters' formations. However, the clusters also reflected the limited incomes and occupational opportunities available to blacks.

In the early 1900s, African Americans in Lansing tended to be more educated and skilled than blacks in large urban areas. Sixty percent of Lansing's African Americans were homeowners, and a few owned businesses. Nonetheless, discrimination forced most to seek jobs in the service industries, where they worked as waiters, cooks and domestic servants.

A large-scale migration of African Americans from the Deep South to the North began around 1915, and blacks arrived in Lansing in greater numbers than ever. Their Deep South origins distinguished them from older, more established families, who began to disassociate themselves from the more recent arrivals. Some older residents moved out of the neighborhood around the Oldsmobile plant and formed smaller clusters elsewhere.

*William Leabs, Jr., an African American businessman, stands before his store, the Marquette Shoe Shining Parlor, listed in the Lansing City Directories of 1902 and 1904.*



Meanwhile, whites began to more actively enforce segregated housing — common methods included restricting deeds and refusing to sell to blacks.

The 1920s brought a housing boom, and with it came the first “white flight” to outlying areas.

In 1929, Malcolm X’s parents, Earl and Louise Little, were sued for purchasing property in the Westmont Subdivision on the northwest side. Westmont property deeds explicitly forbid sales to anyone “not of the Caucasian race.” The Littles’ house burned to the ground in November 1929.

In his autobiography, Malcolm X claimed that white arsonists caused the fire.

Segregation became even more pronounced during the Great Depression. African Americans suffered high unemployment rates, and racial segregation limited available housing. Many had to live with relatives. The neighborhood near the Oldsmobile plant became increasingly crowded during the 1920s. Lots in African American neighborhoods were often small and poorly surveyed. Housing shortages during and after World War II only exacerbated the situation, as did the influx of more newcomers after the war.

With the 1960s came a new catchphrase: “urban renewal.” In Lansing, this began with the construction of Interstate 496 through the heart of the city. It bisected the city’s largest black neighborhood, and 890 dwellings — many occupied by African Americans — were demolished to complete the highway. An Oldsmobile expansion project eliminated even more housing. Two urban renewal projects around the Capitol destroyed another 372 dwellings, with African Americans again occupying the majority of them. New housing projects presented alternative living spaces, but they lacked quality and were too few in number.

In 1970, after the urban renewal projects, about 11,000 African Americans lived in Lansing.

According to the 2000 census, that number rose to approximately 26,000.

The black population of African Americans continues to grow as Lansing becomes more modern and diverse. James Little would not recognize the town he helped to establish.





## Publisher's Note:

The Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL) electronically publishes *Michigan Genealogist* on a quarterly basis. It is intended to provide family history-related information to interested researchers and to inform readers about resources found in the Library of Michigan, State Archives of Michigan and other HAL departments.

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Due to the length of time needed to conduct genealogical research, the staff of the Library of Michigan and State Archives is unable provide extensive research services. Check the Library of Michigan and Archives of Michigan Web pages at [www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan](http://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan) and [www.michigan.gov/archivesofmi](http://www.michigan.gov/archivesofmi) for more information on policies and procedures regarding genealogical research.

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